

Department of Auditor-Controller

Children's Group Home Ombudsman Activity Report

October 2013

Total Calls	<u>12</u>	General Statistics	
		Youth Callers	Time of Youth Calls
Calls returned within one business day	<u>12</u>	Female <u>7</u>	AM <u>3</u>
Calls resolved within 30 business days	<u>12</u>	Male <u>1</u>	PM <u>5</u>
Follow-up calls	<u>32</u>		
		Total Youth Callers <u>8</u>	
		Total Adult Callers <u>4</u>	

CALLS RELATING TO:

Collaboration Contacts/Referrals/Information

DCFS -Social Workers	<u>3</u>
DCFS - Child Protection Hotline	<u>2</u>
Group Home	<u>4</u>
Police Department	<u>1</u>
Probation Ombudsman	<u>1</u>
General Information	<u>3</u>

TOTAL: 14 (Note: A call may have multiple contacts/referrals)

Personal Rights

<u> </u> Allowance	<u> </u> Health/Med, Dental, Psych Care
<u> </u> Clothing/Personal Property	<u>2</u> Respect (Penny Lane)
<u> </u> Contact	<u>1</u> School/Community/Religious Svcs (Turmont)
<u>2</u> Food (Murrell's Farm, Rosemary's)	<u> </u> Work/Job Skills
<u> </u> Living Condition	

TOTAL: 5

Personal

<u> </u> Crime/Gang-related	<u>1</u> Physical Abuse/Harm (Rosemary's)
<u> </u> Discipline	<u> </u> Fear, Threats, Intimidation, Isolation
<u> </u> Discrimination	<u> </u> Relationship
<u> </u> Emotional Issues	<u> </u> Sexual Interaction
<u> </u> Pregnancy/Infant Care	<u> </u> Substance Abuse
	<u> </u> Neglect

TOTAL: 1

Other

<u>1</u> CSW Related Issues (Penny Lane)
<u> </u> Sibling Separation Concern

TOTAL: 1

Visits/Outreach

Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems (3 sites)

There were no questions or issues expressed during visit.

TOTAL: 3

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LA County STARS

See the L.A. County Fraud Hotline.

Important: Employees reporting fraud are protected under the County's "Whistle-Blower" ordinance, County Code Section 5.02.060.

Services Locator

Find the LA County services and facilities that serve your area...

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News



In Memoriam: Former Auditor-Controller - J. Tyler McCauley

It is with a heavy and saddened heart to share with you the passing of our beloved friend, role model, and inspirational human being, former Auditor-Controller, J. Tyler McCauley.

Links of Interest

[Children's Group Home Ombudsman](#)
[Contractor Alert Reporting Database Manual](#)
[County of Los Angeles Claims Board](#)
[County of Los Angeles Property Tax Portal](#)
[Foundation Reporting Form](#)
[Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#)
[LA County Employees Page](#)
[Online Payments Now Available!](#)
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Redevelopment Agency Dissolution

This link provides audited financial statements, Enforceable Obligation Payment Schedules (EOPS), Recognized Obligation Payment Schedules (ROPS) and other documents for each of the 71 RDAs in Los Angeles County.



eHR Personnel and Timekeeping System Going Live April 2012

Beginning April 12, 2012, users will have access to the new eHR system that replaces the Countywide Timekeeping and Payroll, Personnel System (CWTAPPS).



Employee Self-Service (ESS)

Beginning April 12, 2012, new ESS features allow you to submit your timesheet, make changes to your name and address and view your key personnel information online.



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LA County Auditor-
Controller
**Children's
Group
Home
Ombudsman**

Welcome!

The Children's Group
Home Ombudsman
serves as a personal
rights advocate,
providing a confidential
and informal process to
resolve issues that
arise for children
placed in group homes
by the Los Angeles
County Department of
Children and Family
Services (DCFS).



Contact Us Phone: 1-888-445-1234 (it's a free call)

Email: afriend@auditor.lacounty.gov Online Form: [click here](#)

**SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION MEETING
November 20, 2013
Reporting for the month of October 2013**

AWOLs: There were 128 AWOLs involving 115 youth: 10 youth AWOL'd more than once, with some AWOL'ing up to 3 times in this same month.

49 remain AWOL	1 HOP
47 returned to GH	5 CCP
12 are in JH	1 Terminated

Outstanding AWOL detainments from previous months and arrests in September 2013:

11 youth were arrested / detained in October. 6 are currently in JH, 2 are in a GH, 1 is in Camp, and 2 are terminated.

Statistics and Findings regarding AWOLs in October

- 1) Over 53% of the AWOL incidents were Hispanic males with a mean age of 16.4 years. The second largest population of AWOL'd youth during the month of October were Hispanic and Black females with each group accounting for 16% of the AWOLs. The overall average age of youth who AWOL'd in October was 16.6 years.

Recommendation:

- For the past 15 months, the average age and majority race of AWOL'd youth remained about the same. Therefore, for all 14 months, Hispanic males above the age of 16 were around 40% to 50% of AWOL incidents. However, during the last month there was an increase in the female AWOL incidents. The reason for the large number of Hispanic male AWOLs may likely be a representation of the general population of LA County. Even if that is a fact, it still means this is the population that Probation needs to work with to decrease AWOLs. DPOs, Therapists, or other GH and County staff, should interview at-risk youth (mainly Hispanic males around the age of 16) to find out about certain feelings related to age, gender, or cultural stresses and consider possible solutions to decrease these feelings/stresses.
 - Make DPOs and GH staff aware of the demographics that are at most risk of AWOLing. Research and identify possible methods or daily practices of assisting youth to come to a less stressful state of mind.
- 2) The quicker the GH notifies Probation staff of the AWOL, the faster Probation can begin the steps necessary to detain the youth. For the month of September, all the GHs were compliant with notifying Probation about the AWOL'd youth within the required time frame.

Recommendation:

- In the last 4 months the GHs have shown an improvement in timeliness and consistency with regards to AWOL reporting.

- Reiterate to GH staff and to legal guardians of youth the importance of reporting an AWOL as soon as the incident occurs. Specifically, all AWOLs should be reported within 24 hours in order to expedite the issuance of a bench warrant and the recovery of the youth. Statistics should be shared with GH staff to illustrate the real results of delayed reporting.
- 3) As with previous months, certain GHs showed a higher percentage of AWOLs than other GHs. This was determined by taking the number of AWOLs for that month and comparing it to the number of beds available in the GH (population). It is important to note that youth who AWOL'd more than once in the same GH were only counted as 1 AWOL. For October 2013, 5 GHs had a 30% or higher AWOL rate. This percentage also reflects last month's findings.

Recommendation:

- Continue to track the frequency of AWOLs for each GH and see if a consistent pattern remains amongst the same group homes. At this point, certain GHs have shown to have a consistently high number of AWOLs.
 - Several confounding factors have to be controlled to identify a direct correlation between GH treatment of youth and AWOLs. For example, a high AWOL rate for a GH could only mean that that particular GH gets higher risk youth.
 - Investigate GHs that have an unusually high number of AWOLs compared to other GHs to see possible reasons.
 - Interview youth during investigation.
 - Create a plan of action based on results (directives for GH, staff training, etc).
 - Monitor GH to see if trend has stopped after implementation of programs or directives.
- 4) During the month of October, there was a positive correlation detected between bench warrant requests and timely bench warrant issuance and effect on youth detainment. As in, the longer time it took to issue the bench warrant, the less likely it was for the youth to be detained that same month:

Recommendation:

- Regardless of strong or weak correlations, consider the importance of having a bench warrant issued as soon as possible for an AWOL'd youth. Overall, the sooner a bench warrant is issued, the more likely it is that the youth will be detained by the end of the month (as several previous months' data has shown).

Final Remarks on AWOLs: Similar to last month, all 'insignificant' AWOLs were also incorporated into the data this month (i.e. youth AWOL'ing for an hour). Certain trends relating to race, age, and sex continued to mirror the previous months' data.

iTrack (SIRs)-

There were **0** child deaths or suicide attempts reported for the month of October 2013 in iTrack. The largest category for SIRs continued to be "other", providing no description of the type of incident the youth was involved in.

Recommendation:

- Instruct all iTrack users to NOT select the category "other," unless incident undeniably does not belong under any specific category. Another option is to remove the category "other," and instead add additional specific categories (once it is determined why users are selecting "other"). Probation is currently discussing improvement ideas regarding iTrack with ISD software managers.

GROUP HOME MONITORING AND INVESTIGATIONS:

Current:

No Group Homes are currently on any HOLD Status.

Child Abuse, we had 2 referrals, 1 was **Unfounded** and the other is **Pending**.

Penny Lane- youth alleged that a Group Home staff pushed him out of the way while conducting a search of his personal property. Allegation was **Unfounded** for Physical Abuse.

Children Are Our Future (Terry House)- Youth alleged that a staff physically assaulted him during a struggle over the telephone. Youth was detained for hitting staff on the back of his head, resulting in an injury. Allegation for Physical Abuse is **Pending**

Group Home Investigations:

We had **10** Group Home investigations during the month of October 2013, **5** were **Unfounded**, **3** were **Substantiated**, and **2** are **Pending** investigation findings.

Trinity Yucaipa- Several cell phones were discovered at the GH by a DPO of several youth. DPO discovered a "fight club" style fight that was recorded on one of the cell phones and posted to Facebook. Investigation revealed a lack of supervision by the staff that was on duty and failed to watch the youth and was subsequently terminated. Allegation was **Substantiated**.

Bayfront- A youth that was attempting to AWOL was placed in a restraint, which is a violation of his personal rights. Allegation was **Substantiated**.

Rancho San Antonio- Probation Ombudsman received a complaint that the GH took money from the youth's bank account. Allegation was **Unfounded**.

David and Margaret- Youth's mother made a complaint that her daughter had suffered multiple bug bites at the GH. Youth's mother felt that her daughter was not being properly cared for. Allegation was **Unfounded**.

Penny Lane (Main Campus)- DPO made a complaint that the GH is failing to address substance abuse issues at the GH and are not being properly reported. Allegation was **Unfounded**.

Leroy Haynes- Two staff were not able to properly break up a fight, with one youth sustaining an injury. Allegation was **Unfounded**.

Trinity Yucaipa- Youth alleged in court that the GH staff are bringing in drugs and alcohol and taking youth on alcohol runs. Allegation was **Unfounded**.

Touch A Life Foundation- A/C Office discovered during a fiscal audit that the GH is using an MFT intern is not being supervised by a licensed professional. Allegation is **Pending**.

Bayfront- An out of County youth alleged that two LA County youth forced him to perform oral sex on them. Allegation **Substantiated** for lack of supervision.

Bayfront- Public Defender complaint that youth went months with her broken eye glasses being replaced. Allegation is **Pending**.

Monitoring:

We have finished all Monitoring Reports for the 2012-2013, fiscal year, however; all reports have not been posted and remain in various stages of approval. The 2013-2014, Monitoring is underway.

Permanency-

We are in various stages of preparation for **2 potential adoptions, finalizing 1** and **5 potential legal guardianships** by the end of the year or before.

In October 2013, we completed no Adoptions or Legal Guardianships; however, our next adoption is scheduled for December 12, 2013. .